

Department of Family and Children Services Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual	Section: Administrative Part: 900 Page: 1 of 8 Date: May 2005
Title: <b>Records Management</b>	

- 901. REFERENCES:** O.C.G. A., Code Section 50-18-90 and 92(a)  
O.C.G.A., Code Section 50-18-94(3)  
O.C.G. A., Code Sections 50-18-120 and 121, O.C.G.A.

**902. Overview:**

- A. Georgia Law specifies that everything that is created by employees (and agents of the Department) in the course of their job is a “record”. If there are questions about specific situations, staff should confer with their Legal Services Officer for additional information. State Law also specifies that all records be destroyed only as indicated in an approved records retention schedule. The Department of Archives and History is charged with approving the schedules.
- B. It is the policy of the Department of Human Resources that the management of DHR/DFCS records shall be in compliance with the Georgia Records Management and Microform Acts. DHR Office of Facilities and Operation Services, manages the business operations of the office, departmental policy publication and distribution, administration of the departmental records management program, mail service for 2 Peachtree Building, and forms distribution statewide for the department’s forms.
- C. The DHR Office of Facilities and Support Services, Operations Support Section, has been given the responsibility of implementing this policy on a department-wide basis.
- D. The Division of Family and Children Services will provide written appointment of a Records Coordinator and Records Alternate to assist the Office of Facilities and Support Services in implementing this policy and to approve records transactions on behalf of the Division.
- E. The Department of Archives and History approve record retention schedules. Once retention schedules are approved they become authoritative, directive and have the force and effect of law.
- F. Local DFCS records will be maintained in accordance with approved retention schedule for each record series in an agency’s custody. No records will be scheduled for permanent retention in a County DFCS office or scheduled for retention any longer than is absolutely necessary in the performance of required functions.

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### 903. Definitions

1. Records: All documents, papers, letters, maps, books, or other material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in performance by any agency.
2. Record Series: Documents or records having similar physical characteristics or relating to a similar function or activities that are filed in a unified arrangement.
3. Retention Schedule: A set of disposition instructions prescribing how long, where, and in what form a record series shall be kept.

### 904. Procedures

- A. DFCS shall not dispose of (i.e., destroy or give away) any public record except in accordance with a retention schedule approved by the State Records Committee and the Georgia Archives.

### 905. Confidentiality of Records for Local DFCS

- A. A DFCS person receiving a request to inspect a record subject to the Open Records Act (ORA) is responsible for taking steps to have records available for inspections and copying with three business days from the date the request is received. Child Protective Services Chapter 21 , Section IX. Before releasing information that may be of a confidential nature to any person outside the employment of DFCS, consult with the Legal Counsel in the DFCS Division Director's office.
- B. Although County Departments of Family and Children Services must adhere to the laws established by the Open Records Act, certain records maintained in the counties must be secured in confidential files. Primarily these are documents that contain client names or information of a sensitive, personal nature regarding DFCS employees.

### 906. Record Retention schedule and Destruction Procedures for Local DFCS

- A. A record retention schedule for administrative files has been developed for local Department of Family and Children Services. (See Attachment #1).
- B. Local DFCS files must be destroyed by either shredding or by burning their contents. If files are burned, a DFCS employee must witness their destruction. If the DFCS Agency wishes to dispose of its files through recycling, the material must be first be shredded to guard against the accidental disclosure of confidential information.
- C. The attached retention schedule pertains to Administrative files only. Reference should be made to the appropriate program policy and procedures manual for the retention and disposal of Benefits and Social Services files.

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NOTE: According to DHR Records Management office, DFCS records cannot be buried in a public land field as a means of disposal.

**907. Attachment**

1. Attachment #1- Record Retention List

**Type Files**

**Record Retention Requirements**

<b><u>Financial Files:</u></b>	Upon closure of audit year by Office of Audits, hold <b><u>Financial Files</u></b> required number of years in office, and then destroy except for records involved in pending litigation or unresolved audits. These should be held until problems are resolved, then hold 4 years from year in which audit is closed, then destroy. (Example: If county's last audit was final for fiscal year 2004, you would keep records for current fiscal year 2005, 2004,2003, and 2002).  Exception is for records involved in pending litigation or unresolved audits. Hold these records until resolved, then hold 4 years from year in which audit is closed, then destroy.
Bank Statements Bank Reconciliations	4 years
Batch Sheets	6 months (County DFCS office and Regional Accounting office)
Bids and Competitive Selection Records	7 years
Bills for Services Rendered	4 years
Budget and Budget Revisions, Approved	4 years
Cancelled Checks	4 years
Cash Balances and Reconciliation	4 years
Contracts and Agreements (Service Maintenance, Rental, Building lease, etc.)	From the end of the fiscal year in which contract/agreement ends, 6 years
Deposit Slips and Reconciliation	4 years

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Equipment Purchases	5 years after disposition of equipment
Federal and state Grant Project Files, Non-Education Agencies	3 years after submission of final financial report
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Federal and State Grant Project Files, Education Agencies	5 years after submission of final report or denial of application
Financial Reports (Balance Sheet and Statement of Revenue and Expenses)	4 years
General Ledger Trail Balances	4 years
Invoices, Paid Bills	4 years
Journal Entries/Vouchers	4 years
MIERs	4 years
Month-end Reports – Journals, Registers, etc.	4 years
Professional Membership Records	4 years
Purchase Orders/ Receiving Reports	4 years
Receipts	4 years
Refund/Disbursement Requests	4 years
Restricted Funds – Adults	Records detailing the receipts and expenditures for APS clients are held for 6 years after the probate date of the client’s estate.
Restricted Funds – Children	Records detailing the receipts and expenditures for CPS clients are held for 10 years after child has reached the 21 <sup>st</sup> birthday.
Signature Cards/ Signature Authorizations	7 years after authorization expires

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Travel Expense Statements	4 years
<b><u>Administration Files</u></b>	
Audits Reports (Agency Copy)	5 years or two successive audits, whichever is longer
Annual Financial Statements (Department of Audits)	Permanent
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Annual Report Publication	3 years or until no longer needed for reference
Blank Forms and Duplicates	Retain for useful life
Calendars	Retain until no longer useful
County DFCS Board Minutes of Meetings	4 years
Correspondence, General	4 years
Crisis or Disaster Records	4 years
Emergency Preparedness Plan	5 years after superseded or updated
Emergency Relief Records	Permanent
Federal and State Grant Reports	Permanent
Inventories	5 years after disposition of equipment
Legal Reference Materials	10 years
Minutes and Agenda	Permanent
Open Records Act Requests and Correspondence	7 years
Periodic Reports	Permanent, retain 1 copy
Policies and Procedures	3 years after superseded



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Employee Personnel Files – Permanent (Full-time) Staff	3 years (Official Personnel File kept in State Personnel Office)
Employee Personnel Files – Temporary Staff	3 years
Employee Retirement Plans, Copies of	Retain for useful life
EEOC Reports	3 years
Family Medical Leaves Case Files	3 years after separation
Final Leave status – Cumulative leave held by individual employee	Place in personnel file after separation
Job Recruitment Materials	2 years

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Leave Donation Records	1 year after leave used
Leave Records	5 years
Position Classification Materials	4 years after position is reclassified
Pre-employment Assessments, Not hired (Tests, Exams)	3 years
Training Records	5 years
Unemployment Compensation Records	5 years after end of fiscal year in which the transaction occurred.
Work Schedules (Daily and Weekly)	5 years
Workers' Compensation Claims,	

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Closed	5 years and settlement of all claims due
<b><u>Payroll Files</u></b>	
Annual Payroll Earnings Reports, including deductions	50 years after tax year in which the records were created
Deduction Authorizations	5 years after deductions are changed
Deduction Records	5 years after end of fiscal year
Employee Retirement Contribution Reports	6 years
Garnishments	3 years after release from garnishment
Salary and Wage Records	5 years after the end of the fiscal year
Unclaimed Pay Checks	1 year
Withholding Allowance Certificates (W-2s and W-4s)	5 years after superseded